

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

April 13, 2010

**Proclamation of Remote Area Medical (RAM) Week 2010**

Remote Area Medical Volunteer Corporation (RAM) is a nonprofit volunteer organization that offers free health services (medical, dental and vision care) on a short-term basis throughout the world. RAM has successfully held hundreds of free clinics providing services to thousands of men, women and children. Today, 60% of its missions are not in the third world, but in the United States.

With increasing unemployment rates and the rising cost of healthcare, many Americans now find themselves uninsured or underinsured. In California, this situation worsened in July 2009, when the state's Medi-Cal system stopped providing dental and optometry coverage for low-income adults, leaving thousands more without dental and vision coverage. The state also capped enrollment in their health insurance program for children of the working poor. These factors, coupled with the rising unemployment rate, have left thousands of Californians unable to afford medical, dental and vision care.

In addition, Los Angeles County is the epicenter of the uninsured in the United States, with over 2 million residents without health coverage. Because of this need in California, RAM conducted its first free healthcare expedition into a major metropolitan area last year and came to Los Angeles. Thousands of lives were changed during those eight days in August 2009 where RAM provided approximately 14,500 medical, dental

**- MORE -**

MOTION

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YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

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and vision services to more than 6,300 patients. RAM hopes to do it again in 2010 and make history.

RAM will host its second annual free health clinic in Los Angeles County from April 27<sup>th</sup> to May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 at the Los Angeles Sports Arena, starting at 5:30 a.m. Estimated patients for each of the seven-days are 1,200 for medical, dental and vision services. In addition to the immediate care provided during the free clinic, RAM will emphasize health education, prevention, and self-care. Thousands of volunteers are needed, specifically dentists, optometrists, ophthalmologists and other specialty physicians, to effectively meet the needs of the patients. To volunteer, please visit [www.ramfreeclinic.org](http://www.ramfreeclinic.org).

**THEREFORE, I MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

- 1) Proclaim the week of April 27<sup>th</sup> through May 3<sup>rd</sup> as "Remote Area Medical Week" in Los Angeles County and encourage those residents of the County who are uninsured or underinsured and seeking medical, dental or vision care to take part in this event offered at no cost to the participants.
- 2) Encourage County departments to participate in the event to the extent doing so is consistent with their mission and budgetary constraints.

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